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SPECIAL COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID

MESSAGES RECEIVED ON THE OCCASION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

(Issued in accordance with a decision taken by the Special Committee at its 656th meeting, on 20 March 1992)

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I. MESSAGES FROM MEMBER STATES

ARGENTINA

Message from Mr. Guido Di Tella, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Worship of Argentina

[Original: Spanish]

The Government and people of Argentina, through their tradition and their culture, categorically reject any system which is based on any form of racial discrimination or which permits discriminatory practices. For that reason, Argentina has always given its firmest support to any initiative aimed at the eradication of practices of that kind.

In that spirit, and on the occasion of the observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I wish to reaffirm the support of the Government of Argentina for the important role which the United Nations has played and is continuing to play, particularly through the General Assembly and the Special Committee against Apartheid, in securing recognition of equality among men, irrespective of their origin, race, ideology or creed.

The Argentine Republic wishes once again to add its voice to the voices of those calling for the speedy elimination, once and for all, of all forms of racial, political or religious discrimination.

BAHAMAS

Message from the Government of the Bahamas

[Original: English]

The Government and people of the Bahamas salute the Special Committee against Apartheid on the occasion of this most solemn event, which serves to reinforce the commitment of the international community in its desire to see a world devoid of racism and racial discrimination, a world where equality, justice and peace prevail, regardless of colour, race, sex or creed.

In an era when dramatic changes are taking place, we can all agree that such changes must encompass all realms, including the elimination of racism and racial discrimination in all forms. At a time when racism and racial discrimination continue to persist, and with disturbing consequences in the international community and more so in South Africa, the work of the Special Committee against Apartheid remains ever more pertinent, and in this regard the Government of the Bahamas commends the Special Committee for its continued decisive leadership in maintaining the momentum of world opinion and action against the policy of apartheid of the Government of South Africa.

The Government of the Bahamas reiterates its opposition to the policy of apartheid and stands firmly behind the decisions taken by Commonwealth Heads of Government at the recent summit at Harare. The Government also joins others in calling upon the international community in general and the United Nations in particular to continue to give the highest priority to programmes aimed at combating racism, racial discrimination and apartheid and to intensify their efforts during this latter part of the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination.

The Bahamas will continue to make its contribution through its moral and material support and reaffirms its unequivocal commitment to the struggle of the majority for human rights, fundamental freedoms and social justice.

BANGLADESH

Message from H.E. Mr. Khaleda Zia, Prime Minister of Bangladesh

[Original: English]

On this solemn occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I, on behalf of the people and the Government of Bangladesh, wish to reaffirm our unequivocal opposition to and rejection of racism and racial discrimination in all its forms and practices and particularly its most abhorrent institutionalized manifestation - apartheid.

The Government of Bangladesh, in the firm belief that apartheid constitutes a heinous crime against the dignity of mankind, stands fully committed in its support for the efforts of the people of South Africa to establish, through peaceful means, a united, non-racial and democratic society in South Africa in which all its people, irrespective of race, colour, gender, caste or creed will enjoy the same fundamental freedom and basic human rights. We are also bound by our Constitution and our adherence to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights to oppose racism and racial discrimination in any form.

In this regard, the Government of Bangladesh welcomes the recent developments in South Africa and is confident that we will soon witness the inevitable realization of the long-cherished objective of the people of South Africa to achieve their inalienable national rights for political, social and economic emancipation. We hope that these developments will set in motion positive and irreversible trends towards the total abolition of apartheid and the establishment of a united and multiracial democracy in South Africa.

BARBADOS

Message from Mr. Maurice A. King, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Barbados

[Original: English]

On 21 March, we honour the memory of those who lost their lives in the tragic massacre at Sharpeville in South Africa. This annual remembrance is now symbolic of the resistance to racism and racial discrimination. It is a reaffirmation of freedom, social justice and harmony.

It was in October 1965 that the United Nations decreed that this memorial should be marked as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Just more than a year later, Barbados joined the United Nations and proclaimed, for the entire world to note, that the people of Barbados:

> "... do not draw a dividing line between their internal affairs and their foreign policy. They strive in their domestic policy arrangements to create a just society for themselves. In their Constitution, they reaffirm respect for the rule of law; they also declare their intention to establish and maintain the kind of society which enables each citizen, to the full extent of his capacity, to play his part in the national life ..."

These were the words of Errol Barrow, Prime Minister of Barbados, speaking to the United Nations in December 1966.

We therefore have a solemn duty, here in our own country, to be shining examples of the high ideals we proclaim internationally. We can, for example, confidently say that since the year 1965 we have sought in our ways to remove from our social organization and institutions vestiges of an oppressive past.

In that time, we have also witnessed incessant struggles to remove barriers to full participation by all peoples in their country's affairs. Whenever this occurs, Barbados does not hesitate to offer its support and encouragement. But as barriers are removed and hurdles jumped, seemingly greater obstacles appear on the horizon.

There can be no doubt that, even in 1992, institutional racism still constitutes part of the environment in which people of colour must survive in most parts of the world. As if this were not daunting enough, overt racist attitudes and practices are increasing and enveloping some countries where we thought enlightenment, which should accompany civilization, was pervasive.

Rumblings of racial discord in many capitals of Europe, North America and elsewhere have resurrected the spectre of a bygone age of skinheads, neo-Nazis, fascists, Ku Klux Klansmen and other crude, violent and

unsophisticated racist manifestations. In the face of all this, we have to be sure about who we are and what we stand for as Barbadians.

It would be remarkable, and certainly a statement about a nasty and brutish human condition, if, as we work with such determination to see apartheid dismantled in South Africa, we are then visited with other forms of vicious racism across continents.

The outcome of the referendum in South Africa, crudely undemocratic as it was in excluding participation by the majority, provides a ray of hope that the proponents of freedom, justice and liberty in South Africa will triumph.

No one should doubt that in its external relations and international positions, Barbados will take a firm stance on matters for which our national conscience, way of life and Constitution are clear. The promotion of racism will receive both a visceral and philosophical denunciation from us because our ideals and aspirations are inconsistent with such backward and immoral practices.

Barbados' call in 1992 extends across the horizons of the Caribbean to Africa, as did Aime Cesaire's call in 1939 entitled "Cahier d'un retour au pays natal" (Statement of a Return to my Native Country):

"for it is not true that the work of man is finished

that man has nothing more to do in the world but be a parasite in the world that all we now need is to keep in step with the world

but the work of man is only just beginning and it remains to man to conquer all the violence entrenched in the recesses of his passion

and no race possesses the monopoly of beauty, of intelligence, of force, and there is a place for all at the rendezvous of victory ..."

BRAZIL

Message from the Government of Brazil

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the celebration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Brazilian Government reiterates its commitment to the upholding of the fundamental principle of equality of all men and women irrespective of their race. Brazil also restates its full and utmost, condemnation of racial discrimination in all its forms, and especially of the apartheid system, which contradicts the values of brotherhood and equality among different races and cultures, so deeply rooted in the Brazilian national formation.

The Brazilian Government continues to expect that the process of eradication of the hideous system of apartheid will be strengthened and accelerated leading to the establishment of a multiracial democracy where justice, prosperity and peace will be ensured for all South Africans.

The Brazilian Government is deeply concerned with the fact that in other regions of the world - which include countries with a long tradition in the defence of human rights - there has been an intensification of racist and discriminatory ideas and practices. Brazil hopes that today's celebration will lead to a reflection on the necessity of solving racial problems also in these regions.

CHILE

Message from Mr. Enrique Silva Cimma, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Chile

[Original: Spanish]

On the occasion of yet another observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I wish to assure you of the complete commitment of the Government and people of Chile to the cause of total elimination of all forms of racial discrimination.

The Government of Chile considers it a fundamental policy of its administration to reinforce respect for the absolute equality of all persons before the law, without discrimination of any kind.

Kindly accept my best wishes for the success of the activities of the Special Committee against Apartheid, whose objectives, enshrined in international law, are gradually being achieved.

CHINA

Message from H.E. Li Peng, Premier of the State Council of China

[Original: Chinese]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I would like to express, on behalf of the Chinese Government and people, our solidarity with and support for the Special Committee against Apartheid as well as our appreciation for the work it has carried out under your leadership in support of the effort of the South African people in eliminating racial discrimination and apartheid.

For a long time, racial discrimination and apartheid, a system practised in South Africa that tramples underfoot and denies the basic rights of the

vast majority of the Black people, have met with uncompromising opposition of the South African people and world-wide condemnation. We are pleased to see that the situation in South Africa has undergone some positive changes over the past year or so. The South African authorities have abolished the last remaining legal pillars of apartheid. And the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), participated in by the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) and other liberation and mass organizations together with the South African authorities, was convened at the end of last year, thus ushering in a new phase in the process of a political settlement. All this indeed deserves our welcome. However, it must be pointed out at the same time that the apartheid system in South Africa has not been completely eradicated and the Black majority remains deprived of its political rights. Under such circumstances, the international community should continue its efforts to pressure the South African authorities to make good their promises at an early date by thoroughly eliminating the apartheid system and accelerating the political settlement process of the South African question.

The Chinese Government and people will, as always, firmly support the South African people in their just struggle against racial discrimination and apartheid and remain convinced that the people of South Africa will surely achieve their goal of establishing a united, democratic and racially equal new South Africa.

COLOMBIA

Message from Ms. Noemi Sanin de Rubio, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia

[Original: Spanish]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination I should like to extend the support and solidarity of the people and Government of Colombia to the South African masses struggling for a society free from injustice and discrimination.

Colombia trusts that the efforts being deployed by the Government of President F. W. de Klerk, reinforced by the results of the referendum of 16 March 1992, will lead to the total elimination of apartheid and to the establishment, in South Africa, of a multiracial government which will guarantee the effective enjoyment of political, economic and social rights to all sectors of the South African population.

CUBA

Message from Mr. Isidoro Malmierca, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba

[Original: Spanish]

The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is an auspicious occasion on which to emphasize once again the leading role played by the United Nations in the struggle to remove this blot on humanity which can still be found even today in many countries. As is well known, one of the purposes of the United Nations, as proclaimed in its Charter, is to promote and encourage respect for human rights without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion, and a number of important international conventions have been concluded under the auspices of the United Nations and specialized agencies to ensure that suitable measures are put in place to protect those groups which are particularly vulnerable to discrimination.

However, despite these efforts which have been going on for years within the United Nations system, recently there have been outbreaks of racism and discriminatory actions against ethnic groups; these are of concern to the international community, both because they have occurred repeatedly and because of the adverse economic and social impact which they have on their victims, particularly children, women and old people, even though no population group totally escapes such criminal acts. There can be no doubt that the dramatic increase in the proportion of the world's population living in conditions of chronic undernourishment or malnutrition and lacking access to education and culture and even to health-care systems is due in part to discriminatory policies against particular ethnic groups.

In South Africa the black majority population still lives under the iniquitous system of apartheid, since the peace process which has been started has not removed yet the bases of oppression. For that reason, the sanctions against the Pretoria regime must remain in place until it is forced to give in and to eliminate completely the structure of apartheid, and until the gains achieved by the black people of that country are irreversible.

In a different part of the world, the Palestinian people continues to suffer the onslaught of its Israeli oppressors, and continues to be discriminated against racially, exploited in its work, barred from its territory, deprived of its property and oppressed by cruel, repressive measures, as we have pointed out on other occasions. Today, the negotiations undertaken to bring peace to the Middle East and, naturally, to establish respect for the self-determination of the Palestinian people as an indispensable prerequisite, appear to be a very long way from reaching their objectives.

Migrant workers in industrialized countries have seen their living conditions deteriorate as a result of acts of racial discrimination which keep them in a position of inferiority within the society in which they live, and

recently they have been the targets of violence by neo-Fascist movements. The developing countries are falling by the wayside, their rates of growth and internal investment have fallen, foreign debt has increased; lacking financial resources of their own they are becoming increasingly dependent on other countries to obtain the resources necessary to their development. All of these factors are driving millions to seek opportunities elsewhere, but after leaving their countries of origin they find themselves humiliated and exploited.

The situation of indigenous communities in countries where they are in the minority is another example of the need to continue combating policies of racial discrimination with the utmost determination. There is a tremendous difference between the standard of living of such communities and that of the majority population in their countries. The differing rates of child mortality, illiteracy and unemployment in themselves demonstrate the inequity with which such minorities are treated and the injustices which are committed against them.

Regrettably, the list of acts of racism in the world is a long one. It is certainly not enough to proclaim, in legislative documents or in conventions, that all races are equal. Broader, more varied and further-reaching action is needed, because racism and racial discrimination have their origins in many different factors, and the United Nations should further this campaign, using all the means at its disposal to deal with the current situation, and should call on the international community to help.

Our country will always be ready to assist with any effort undertaken to this end. Because it is a matter of immutable principle, Cuba is committed to this fight and has demonstrated this only too clearly in every sphere, both by its militant solidarity with other peoples and by the extreme step of our own Revolution, when we removed this blot which had existed in our country up to 1 January 1959. The struggle against racism does not permit any truce.

CYPRUS

Message from H.E. Mr. George Vassiliou, President of Cyprus

[Original: English]

On the solemn occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination I would like to reaffirm the commitment of the Government and the people of Cyprus for the elimination of all forms of racial discrimination and the complete and unequivocal dismantling of apartheid.

In observing this International Day we pay tribute to the memory of the victims of the Sharpeville massacre 32 years ago and all other victims of apartheid.

The United Nations since its inception has been the vanguard of the international community's efforts for the elimination of racial discrimination and apartheid. Apartheid in all its forms and manifestations is unacceptable and should be brought to an end, as called for in the consensus Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa adopted by the General Assembly at its sixteenth special session.

Today, at last, we are witnessing positive developments in South Africa leading to the eradication of apartheid and the establishment of a society of majority rule where all its people may enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms. We welcome these important changes taking place in South Africa.

The people of Cyprus, victims for the last 18 years of racial persecution and discrimination by Turkey, which in 1974 invaded our country and has since continued to occupy a large part of its territory, reaffirm their solidarity with all those suffering from racial discrimination and injustice and pledge to continue their struggle against oppression in all its forms and for justice, freedom and human rights all over the world.

ECUADOR

Message from the Government of Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]

The Government of Ecuador joins with pleasure in observing the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and takes this opportunity to reaffirm its unwavering condemnation and rejection of all forms of racial discrimination.

The Political Constitution, which reflects Ecuador's multiethnic and multicultural character and the sentiments of its people, condemns all forms of colonialism, neocolonialism and racial discrimination or segregation, and recognizes the right of peoples to free themselves from these oppressive systems.

In keeping with this position, and as a State party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Ecuadorian Government is monitoring particularly closely the process initiated in South Africa with a view to abolishing the abhorrent practice of apartheid. The Ecuadorian Government welcomes the progress made and expresses its support for the efforts undertaken to achieve that goal.

GHANA

Message from H.E. Flt.-Lt. J. J. Rawlings, Head of State and Chairman of the Provisional National Defence Council of Ghana

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I wish, on behalf of the people and Government of Ghana and on my own behalf, to salute the concerted efforts of the international community to rid the world of racism and racial discrimination.

As we observe this day, which is also dedicated to the memory of those unarmed South Africans massacred by the forces of apartheid 32 years ago, we reaffirm our conviction that racism and racial discrimination are twin evils that pose a threat to international peace and security. Apartheid, an institutionalized system of these evils, has been justifiably condemned all over the world. Not only is it repugnant and an affront to the dignity of the human being, it is also in violation of the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

Thirty-two years after the massacre at Sharpeville, the apartheid regime has, under sustained and intense internal and international pressure, taken significant steps towards the elimination of the pernicious and abhorrent system. The current negotiations within the forum of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) should accelerate the process to ensure respect for all in South Africa, irrespective of race. These developments are a testimony to the justness of the struggle for which the unarmed Africans were massacred.

The observance of this memorable day this year has acquired a special and additional significance in the light of the resurgence, in other parts of the world, of incidents reflective of racism and racial discrimination. Only vigilance and concerted action by the international community can provide assurance against a relapse of the momentum for fundamental changes in South Africa in particular and the world in general. The adoption of resolution 46/79 A without a vote by the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session points to the determination of the international community to sustain pressure through a mixture of persuasion and sanctions.

On this solemn day, we, the people and Government of Ghana, recalling the sorrow and pain that racism and racial discrimination have caused mankind, determined that apartheid should be eradicated at all costs in South Africa, rededicate ourselves to the legitimacy of the struggle against racism and racial discrimination; we reaffirm our faith in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the principles and objectives of the United Nations.

We pay homage to the fallen heroes of the struggle to liberate South Africa from the suffocating and dehumanizing stranglehold of apartheid. We

salute the heroic sons and daughters of South Africa who have sacrificed all, including precious lives, in the fight against racism and racial discrimination. We salute all who, by word or deed, have contributed towards the elimination of apartheid in South Africa.

We urge the Special Committee against Apartheid on in its vanguard role to secure international peace and security through the concerted efforts of the international community against racism and racial discrimination.

GUINEA

Message from H.E. General Lansana Conte, President of Guinea

[Original: French]

On 21 March 1992, the international community will commemorate the thirty-second anniversary of the tragic events at Sharpeville. It is with satisfaction that I express to you here, on behalf of the Guinean people and Government, our complete solidarity with our South African brothers in their tenacious and courageous struggle to abolish the apartheid system. The recent victory of the progressive forces will accelerate the process of dismantling apartheid and establishing a multiracial and democratic South Africa. We salute the positive role which the United Nations, through the Special Committee against Apartheid, has continually played, both in raising international awareness of the evils of that system and in promoting ways and means of abolishing it. Our country will continue, with greater efforts than before, to make its modest contribution to the achievement of the Special Committee's objectives.

HAITI

Message from H.E. Reverend Jean-Bertrand Aristide, President of Haiti

[Original: French]

At a time when we see racism and xenophobia rising again from the depths of the past, making barbarism commonplace and rendering obsolete the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination prompts us to reflect seriously on the rise of fanaticism and various kinds of nationalism and extremism throughout the world.

As we approach the end of the twentieth century, extremists in every country are in the heart of the great cities, spreading the poison of violence and racial hatred.

Despite the hopes which are emerging in South Africa, the apartheid system, a vestige of slavery in the modern age, undermines the human dignity to which each woman and man in contemporary society unconditionally aspires.

On the occasion of the observance of this Day, on behalf of the Haitian people, I should like to call on the Governments and peoples of the world to wake up to what is happening in the world and to urge them to halt the uncontrolled spread of fascist ideas and crimes, and to work for the genuine promotion of universal values, such as liberty, equality and fraternity among people, which is the essential basis for the building of a truly democratic society.

INDONESIA

Message from H.E. Mr. Soeharto, President of Indonesia

[Original: English]

On this solemn occasion of the observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Government and people of Indonesia reiterate their unswerving support for and solidarity with the valiant majority of the South African population in their heroic struggle against the repugnant system of apartheid.

The commemoration of the Sharpeville massacre of 1960 provides us with a unique opportunity to pay homage to the martyrs who laid down their lives for standing up courageously against the racist regime in the struggle to attain justice, equality and liberty. Their sacrifices have not been in vain. Thus, the observance takes on particular relevance in view of the significant political advances made during the past year.

In this regard, the repeal of some apartheid legislations and the convening of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) are encouraging steps towards a new democratic South Africa. We fervently hope that CODESA will lay the necessary groundwork for the peaceful transition of their country. Indonesia is also heartened by the results of the recent referendum held in South Africa which would give the Pretoria Government the necessary mandate to carry out the reforms agreed to during the negotiations with the representatives of the Black majority.

Notwithstanding these positive developments, the international community is deeply concerned at the plight of the Black majority, who continue to languish under vast socio-economic inequities. Such conditions can only undermine the stability required for the successful outcome of the ongoing negotiations. The South African Government must therefore implement programmes to redress these injustices. Furthermore, the international community must resolutely continue to urge the Pretoria Government to release all political prisoners and facilitate the unconditional return of political exiles.

At the same time, it is imperative that the regime take immediate steps to curtail the spiralling violence generated by decades of racial discrimination and to monitor the implementation of the provisions of the National Peace Accord. Factional strife can only derail or threaten the success of the peaceful political process towards fundamental change in the country. Of special concern also is Pretoria's inability to control or investigate reports of its own security forces' involvement in fuelling such violent chaos in the townships.

As a member of the Special Committee against Apartheid and the Intergovernmental Group to Monitor the Supply and Shipping of Oil and Petroleum Products to South Africa, Indonesia remains convinced that sanctions and international pressure must be maintained until the process of dismantling apartheid has become irreversible and the South African people have achieved their inalienable right to live in a society free from racial bigotry and segregation.

IRAN (ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF)

Message from H.E. Mr. Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I would like to reiterate my full support for the legitimate struggle of the people of South Africa to attain their basic rights, and also to pay tribute to their just efforts against apartheid.

In accordance with its fundamental principles inspired by the noble teachings of Islam and considering racial discrimination as a vile and oppressing measure as well as a crime against humanity, the Islamic Republic of Iran believes that apartheid is in total contravention to the most basic rights of human beings, and blatantly violates the Charter of the United Nations and human rights and is also the antithesis of democracy.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran carefully pursues the issues relating to racial discrimination and believes that the original residents of this country are still under the yoke of discrimination despite the recent positive developments in South Africa.

I sincerely wish that the struggle of the oppressed people of South Africa, coupled with the international efforts, will be able to eradicate apartheid completely as soon as possible and with the common efforts of the international community and the Special Committee against Apartheid, the people of this country will attain their inalienable political, economic, social, cultural and national rights. Finally, I express the complete readiness of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to take every measure to ensure the realization of this objective.

JAMAICA

Message from the Government of Jamaica

[Original: English]

The Government of Jamaica is again pleased to join the Special Committee against Apartheid in observing the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, which also marks the thirty-second anniversary of the Sharpeville massacre.

We have watched closely the progress towards the dismantling of the apartheid system in South Africa since the release of Nelson Mandela on 11 February 1990. The convening of a Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) in December 1991 was a major step in the journey to a democratic and non-racial society in South Africa.

The overwhelming endorsement by South African Whites of the negotiations towards constitutional reform, as evidenced by the results of the recent all-White referendum in South Africa, is a welcomed development. Any other result would in all probability have derailed the process for the rest of this decade and possibly led to serious unrest in that troubled country.

Obviously, much still remains to be done. The fact that there is a significant number of White South Africans determined to maintain the racial divide at all cost is reason enough for the international community to exercise caution in lifting economic and military sanctions against South Africa until it is absolutely clear that the process towards change is in fact irreversible.

The Government of Jamaica remains firm in its support of the movement towards full constitutional democracy in South Africa, based on the principle of "one person, one vote".

As we consider the end of a racist system in South Africa, it is with deep concern that, at this time, when a new world order is taking shape, when a new wave of democracy is sweeping the globe, we are faced with a resurgence in a number of Western industrialized countries of ultra-conservative groups preaching the gospel of racial superiority and sowing the seeds of racial discord. Although these groups might still be on the margins of these societies, their numbers are increasing in this period of economic recession and their voices are being heard. Their message of hate is a clear indication that racial discrimination and its accompanying social problems still plague the world today.

In the effort to eradicate racial discrimination and to accomplish the aims of the Charter of the United Nations in this respect, there remains a great deal of work to be done not only in South Africa but in the international community as a whole. There must be, as we approach the twenty-first century, a concerted effort finally to banish ideas of racial superiority and to develop a true sense of brotherhood in diversity.

JAPAN

Message from H.E. Mr. Michio Watanabe, Vice Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan

[Original: English]

On this solemn occasion in observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I wish to pay high tribute to the valuable efforts of the Special Committee against Apartheid.

The Government and people of Japan remain steadfast in their opposition to apartheid. We appreciate the genuine progress that has been made in South Africa under the leadership of President F. W. de Klerk and the President of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) Nelson Mandela, among others, towards establishing a non-racial democratic system in that country. Particularly noteworthy are the abrogation in June 1991 of the legal foundations of apartheid and the establishment in December 1991 of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA), which opened negotiations on drafting a new constitution. The reconfirmation of support for the continuation of the reform process which President de Klerk began, as expressed in the referendum held on 17 March, is also a source of encouragement.

It is Japan's hope that the negotiations on the new constitution will enjoy the support and cooperation of all parties concerned so that a free and democratic system can be established in South Africa as early as possible.

Japan, for its part, pledges its active participation in United Nations efforts to combat racial discrimination in all its forms and wherever it may occur.

LIBYAN ARAB JAMAHIRIYA

Message from Mr. Ibrahim M. Al-Beshary, Secretary of the People's Committee of the People's Bureau for Foreign Liaison and International Cooperation of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

[Original: Arabic]

The annual observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racism and Racial Discrimination affords the international community an opportunity to reiterate its positions with respect to racism, racial discrimination and efforts to eliminate those two phenomena.

The United Nations has made the objective of eliminating racism and racial discrimination one of its priorities, as reflected in its successive resolutions, declarations and numerous conventions. The Declaration on

Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, adopted by consensus by the General Assembly, constitutes an important turning-point through which the international community stated the practical means of eliminating the apartheid regime and establishing a democratic state in South Africa where all citizens would enjoy the fundamental rights accorded them by revealed religions and affirmed by the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

During the past two years South Africa has witnessed significant developments which show that the long struggle of the South African people has borne fruit. The winds of change have begun to blow with increasing strength in the region, as may be seen in the rescindment of most of the laws which serve as essential props for the apartheid regime, as well as in the lifting of the ban on activities by political organizations, the release of many political prisoners and the return of numerous exiles. It is also evident in the beginning of negotiations between the regime and a number of organizations representing the majority of the South African people, including the African National Congress, for the purpose of establishing democratic institutions through which the entire South African population will enjoy equal rights and duties: this development indicates a growing desire to complete the process of transformation from a racist regime and the establishment of a democratic South Africa free of any discrimination.

Recent developments have shown that there is an almost universal desire to continue the political reform process in South Africa. This was confirmed by the results of the referendum, as reported on 20 March, when the majority of voters expressed their support for the reform process initiated by President de Klerk at the beginning of 1990. The Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya expressed its satisfaction with the result through a statement by the Leader of the Revolution. He said he was pleased by the results of the referendum on President de Klerk's programme, in which over 60 per cent of those who cast their votes in South Africa registered their approval of the reform programme put forward by the President. The programme puts citizens of South Africa on an equal footing with respect to enjoyment of the right of citizenship, thus eliminating racism and establishing the right of all citizens to participate in democratic life.

Despite what has been achieved so far in dismantling apartheid in South Africa, much still remains to be done until all conditions are right for completion of the full transformation to a democratic society. In this connection, the international community must intensify its efforts to ensure that the South African regime removes all the obstacles to the fulfilment of this objective. In particular, the rest of the political prisoners should be released, the return of remaining exiles should be facilitated and acts of violence should be ended. The Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, which has always stood by the people of South Africa in its struggle for the restoration of its fundamental rights and remained determined to participate in every event designed to marshal support for the attainment of those rights, today once again reaffirms that it will continue firmly to back the struggle of the South African people and will endorse all international efforts and

measures to remove every manifestation of racism and racial discrimination and to establish a democratic South Africa free of any discrimination.

Finally, let me not fail on this occasion to commend the Special Committee against Apartheid, both for its continued determination to commemorate this occasion and for its role in the struggle of the United Nations and the international community to eliminate racism and racial discrimination.

MALAYSIA

Message from H.E. Mr. Mahathir Mohamad, Prime Minister of Malaysia

[Original: English]

In observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, on behalf of the Government and the people of Malaysia, I wish to extend to the people of South Africa our good wishes and support for their struggle for freedom and equality.

We in Malaysia are encouraged by the progress and the achievements made so far at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA). Clearly, good sense has prevailed and the people of South Africa have chosen the correct and courageous path towards the objective of a united, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

Malaysia is particularly delighted with the overwhelming support given by White South Africans to the reform and negotiation process initiated by President F. W. de Klerk, who stated that the result has closed the book on apartheid. Nevertheless, Malaysia is aware that apartheid will remain in place until the people of South Africa adopt a democratic, non-racial constitution and a government elected in accordance with that constitition is in place. In this sense, Malaysia wishes to encourage the people of South Africa to continue with their present attitude of reconciliation and accommodation in genuine negotiations and calls upon those still on the sidelines to join in. We believe this is the only viable and honourable way of ending apartheid and its consequences and ensuring the attainment of a just and durable solution.

Today, the majority of South Africans are still denied their democratic rights and many live in misery but they can take solace that it will soon be over. The Government of Malaysia will continue to support the struggle of the oppressed people of South Africa until apartheid is replaced by a non-racial and democratic system.

MALI

Message from H.E. Lt. Colonel Amadou Toumani Touré, President of Mali

[Original: French]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination and the Week of Solidarity with the Peoples Struggling against Racism and Racial Discrimination, I wish, on behalf of the people of Mali, the Transitional Committee for the People's Safety, the Government, and on my own behalf, to renew our unwavering support for the peoples struggling against racism and racial discrimination.

The observance of this Day testifies not only to the commitment of the international community to the cause of millions of men and women throughout the world who are suffering from the inhuman and degrading practices of racism and racial discrimination, but also to the determination of the peoples that cherish peace and justice to fight for the total eradication of the hateful system of apartheid, which has rightly been defined by the United Nations as a crime against humanity. The entire international community must fight this scourge, which is an affront to the dignity of the human person, a grave violation of human rights and a threat to international peace and security. The Republic of Mali, faithful to its anti-racist policy, remains firmly committed to the oppressed peoples and unreservedly condemns racism and racial discrimination in all their forms and manifestations. It fully supports all United Nations activities in line with that position. We rejoice at the convening in South Africa of CODESA, the Convention for a democratic South Africa, attended by the country's main political parties.

The positive results of the referendum held in South Africa on 17 March should encourage all the parties to continue on the path leading to the establishment in South Africa of a democratic and non-racial society.

MEXICO

Message from the Government of Mexico

[Original: Spanish]

In connection with the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Government of Mexico reaffirms its support for the promotion and defence of the human rights and fundamental freedoms embodied in the various instruments and resolutions of the United Nations and expresses its rejection of any form of discrimination or exclusion based on racial, ethnic or other prejudice.

In that context, the Government of Mexico again expresses its support for the efforts of the international community to put an end to all practices of racial discrimination.

The Mexican Government likewise welcomes the beginning of a reform process undertaken by the South African Government and hopes that it will lead as quickly as possible to the total and final elimination of the apartheid regime in South Africa.

Mexico is, however, concerned at the resurgence, particularly in the developed countries, of such discriminatory practices as racism, intolerance, xenophobia and nationalism in their worst forms. In that respect, it is essential for the international community to commit itself to taking the necessary measures to overcome those phenomena.

NIGERIA

Message from H.E. General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, President and Commander-in-Chief of Nigeria

[Original: English]

Today's solemn meeting in observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination once again underscores the collective concern of the international community about the problems associated with racial discrimination and its impact on society at large. It is also a day on which the victims of the Sharpeville massacre are remembered. On behalf of the Government and people of Nigeria and on my own behalf, I extend to the Special Committee very warm wishes for the successful observance of this historic day.

Despite some recent positive developments, the international community must remember that the struggle for the establishment of a non-racial, democratic and non-sexist society in South Africa is yet to be achieved. It is my hope that President F. W. de Klerk will use the results of the Whites-only referendum to expedite the peace process within the framework of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) and wish to appeal to all South Africans to participate in this significant process so that, collectively, they can act with deliberate speed in ensuring the earliest realization of the main objective of CODESA, namely, the establishment of a truly non-racial and democratic country. The international community has a duty to continue exerting necessary measures on the Government of South Africa until the attainment of this objective is well under way.

As we observe today's solemn meeting, I want to pay tribute to the victims of apartheid and pledge Nigeria's continuing active role until this obnoxious system, rightly described as a crime against humanity, is completely eradicated in our continent. I wish the Special Committee a very successful deliberation.

PAKISTAN

Message from H.E. Mr. Mian Muhammad Nawaz Sharif,
Prime Minister of Pakistan

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Government and people of Pakistan join the world community in recalling the brave sacrifices of the martyrs of the Sharpeville massacre for a noble cause. It was a tragic but historic event, which resulted in the universal acknowledgement of the legitimacy of the just struggle of the people of South Africa for dignity, freedom and justice.

The evil system of apartheid is an abominable derogation from the norms of civilized conduct and has been justly condemned by the entire international community. In this decade, which has seen the triumph of freedom and political pluralism, apartheid represents an anachronistic legacy of a cruel colonial age. Pakistan, a country whose conscience is embedded in the spirit of Islamic egalitarianism, has always expressed its abhorrence for apartheid in all its manifestations and has consistently demanded its immediate and complete eradication. In full compliance with the relevant United Nations resolutions and declarations, Pakistan has faithfully implemented the arms embargo against South Africa, and has imposed a total diplomatic, political, economic, trade, financial and shipping boycott of that country. Pakistan will continue to work closely with the international community in ensuring the demise of this exploitative and inhuman creed.

We are encouraged by the recent steps taken by the minority Government in Pretoria to improve the political climate in South Africa. These include the repeal of racial acts, the holding of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) and resuming negotiations with the liberation movements for the adoption of a new constitution. We note with satisfaction the outcome of the recently held referendum in South Africa and urge that efforts towards dismantling apartheid now be undertaken with renewed vigour and resolve.

On behalf of the Government and people of Pakistan, I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm our unequivocal support for the heroic struggle of the people of South Africa for their fundamental rights under the inspiring and sagacious leadership of Mr. Nelson Mandela. It is my prayer and hope that the brave and gifted people of South Africa, who have shown exemplary fortitude in their long quest for freedom, will soon achieve the objective of majority rule and join the community of nations as a free nation.

PANAMA

Message from Mr. Julio E. Linares, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Panama

[Original: Spanish]

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Panama, on behalf of the Panamanian Government and people, sends fraternal greetings to the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

On this occasion the Government of Panama renews its firm support of the States, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and individuals devoting themselves to the eradication of racism, racial discrimination and apartheid.

It likewise notes with satisfaction the progress made by President de Klerk's administration in combating discriminatory legislation.

The Government of the Republic of Panama calls on the South African leaders to seek, through dialogue, a peaceful, negotiated solution which will make it possible to lay the foundations for a juster, more democratic society free of any form of racial discrimination.

PERU

Message from Mr. Augusto Blacker Miller, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Peru

[Original: Spanish]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Government of Peru renews its firm support for the process of total and final eradication of the odious system of apartheid.

In its solidarity with the cause of peoples seeking equality and democracy, the Government of Peru, in accordance with the provision of its political constitution which enshrines the rejection of any form of racial discrimination, reaffirms its commitment to the inalienable right of the South African majority to build a free society.

The people and Government of Peru are carefully following the political developments in South Africa, and welcome the significant progress made towards abolishing apartheid.

Peru reaffirms its hope that these actions will lead as soon as possible to the advent of a just, egalitarian and non-racial society within a framework of broad and peaceful dialogue.

PHILIPPINES

Message from Mr. Raul S. Manglapus, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines

[Original: English]

We mark this occasion, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, with the happy thought that the scourge of apartheid, that abhorrent system of racial discrimination, will soon be eradicated. A new day is dawning in South Africa as the process of its transformation into a non-racial, united and democratic society is under way.

The repeal of major apartheid laws, the freeing of many political prisoners and the repatriation of exiles have helped pave the way to start negotiations on the future of that country. The Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) signals a new phase in the historic process of achieving national reconciliation and working towards a democratic constitution. The results of the recently concluded referendum give a resounding clear mandate to the parties involved in the historic process of South Africa's transformation. We in the Philippines wish the people of South Africa success in the achievement of their noble goals.

While we are heartened by the prospect of the end of the system of apartheid in South Africa, we are concerned by the reported rise of racial discrimination elsewhere. It is alarming that in the major capitals of the world, where many races live side by side, we are witnessing the deterioration of race relations. It is unconscionable that despite the universality of ideas of equality of peoples and races, there seems to be a rise in bigotry and intolerance.

Today, as we observe the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Government and people of the Philippines rededicate themselves to the ideals and the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - that men and women everywhere irrespective of race, colour and creed are created equal. All should be accorded equality in dignity and rights. We can only expect to live in harmony and peace, with justice and respect for all, when racial discrimination has vanished from our world.

PORTUGAL

Message from the 12 States members of the European Community

[Original: English]

The 12 States members of the European Community have always supported efforts to eliminate all forms of racial discrimination. They recall the Declaration on Anti-Semitism, Racism and Xenophobia of the European Council, issued at Dublin on 26 June 1990. They regard racial discrimination as an

intolerable violation of basic human rights, totally incompatible with the relevant principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It denies the principles of dignity and equality inherent to all human beings.

The 12 States members of the European Community continue to express their resolute opposition to any form of discrimination, whether based on race, colour or national or ethnic origin. Such manifestations of racism must be ended, as called for in the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. In this respect, the 12 States members of the European Community are deeply concerned that, despite the efforts of the international community, the odious practice of racial discrimination continues in many parts of the world. The consensus achieved by the international community concerning the Second Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination is a positive sign that the members of the United Nations are deeply involved in their stance against racism and racial discrimination.

The objective of the 12 States members of the European Community remains the complete dismantling of apartheid and the establishment of a free and democratic society in which all South Africans will enjoy equal rights.

The 12 States members of the European Community have already welcomed the start of the work of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) and they reaffirm their conviction that this negotiation process is a unique opportunity for the peaceful transformation of South Africa into a united, democratic and non-racial State and its full reintegration into the international community. They hope that the process initiated in CODESA, of paramount importance for the whole southern Africa region, will continue uninterrupted and that further substantive progress will be achieved, with the broadest possible support of the South African population as a whole.

The 12 States members of the European Community welcome the outcome of the referendum held in South Africa, which will allow the determined pursuit of the democratization process initiated more than two years ago.

SENEGAL

Message from H.E. Mr. Abdou Diouf, President of Senegal

[Original: French]

The occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination once again offers the Government and people of Senegal the opportunity to pay respectful homage to the memory of the martyrs who died in the Sharpeville massacre and to pay a special tribute to those who, with exemplary courage and dignity, continue to combat the apartheid system.

This solemn occasion, which this year coincides with the thirty-second anniversary of the massacre, should remind the international community that, despite its active support for the noble cause of the black populations of South Africa and the laudable efforts undertaken by the South African Government, many South Africans, and in particular the black majority, continue to suffer from the intransigence of a white minority bent on subjecting them to a domination based solely on considerations of race and the desire to preserve their special privileges.

This is a dangerous and blinkered approach.

The international community must therefore at least maintain, if not increase, the pressure which helped to foster the current negotiations, until such time as a democratic, egalitarian and non-racial society is achieved in South Africa in which all the populations of the country can finally live in complete harmony, peace, liberty and justice.

Senegal fully supports this approach, which could only strengthen the South African Government in its courageous and clear-sighted efforts to draw up a new constitution for a democratic South Africa.

This is what it will take for the country to be reconciled with itself, with the rest of the African continent, where it has a leading role to play, and with the international community as a whole, once it has rid itself of the most anachronistic system of the century now drawing to its close.

It is the duty of all countries which cherish peace and justice to support these efforts, so as to ensure that the hopes which have been aroused are not disappointed and that the suffering of the black populations of South Africa is finally ended.

In so doing, they would do justice to the work of President de Klerk and the leader of the African National Congress, whose efforts were honoured recently at a ceremony held on 3 February 1992 at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), when they were awarded the first Houphouët Boigny Prize for peace.

As I said at that ceremony, over which I had the great honour of presiding, "in the eyes both of their country and the world", Frederik de Klerk and Nelson Mandela stand for intelligence, political courage, clear-sightedness and patriotism".

We must help these two great men, who continue to leave their mark on history, face up to the challenges placed in the way of the current negotiating process by those who fiercely oppose the changes envisaged.

In this connection, we should make no mistake about the meaning of the violence which the black populations of South Africa continue to suffer and which is quite simply an attempt to wreck the current negotiating process and to perpetuate the domination of a minority.

These delaying tactics must be defeated for, in a period marked by cooperation and solidarity in international relations, it is intolerable that South Africa should be unable to follow the path of national reconciliation, so that all its valiant sons and daughters can work together on an equal footing to achieve economic, social and cultural progress and realize their vast potential.

The Government and people of Senegal firmly believe in the virtues of dialogue and discretion and hope that they will inspire all parties in South Africa so that, through their determination, good will and realism, the celebration of this day will be a prelude to the establishment in South Africa of a new society in which all citizens may enjoy dignity, freedom and all their rights, without discrimination of any kind.

On behalf of the Government and people of Senegal, and on my own behalf, I should like to express the wish that this year will see the realization of the hopes of the international community and the crowning of the sacrifices made with their own blood by all the men, women and children of South Africa.

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to offer once again my warmest congratulations and encouragement to the Special Committee against Apartheid for its tireless and unceasing efforts to help bring about a favourable and definitive solution to this grievous problem.

SOUTH AFRICA

Message from Mr. R. F. Botha, Minister for Foreign Affairs of South Africa

[Original: English]

The South African Government is pleased to reiterate the solidarity it expressed in 1991 (A/AC.115/L.674) with the objectives of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. It shares the widely held belief that all people should be equal before the law, and that they should enjoy equal rights regardless of race, colour, sex or creed.

Last year in my statement I reported that legislation had or was being introduced to abolish the pillars of apartheid. The laws included the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936, the Group Areas Act of 1966 and the Population Registration Act of 1950. By July 1991 these pillars of apartheid had been demolished.

A landmark National Peace Accord, committing major South African political groupings to a negotiated settlement of the country's problems, was signed on 14 September 1991.

The signatories committed themselves to the principles of peaceful assembly and five freedoms, i.e., freedom of conscience and belief, of speech

and expression, of association, of movement and of participation in peaceful political activity.

A National Peace Secretariat was subsequently established and legislation giving it statutory recognition is currently being processed. The Secretariat is making progress in establishing conflict resolution committees in various areas of the country.

The convening of the Convention for a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) on 20 and 21 December 1991 was a further milestone and a reflection of the political will and commitment of the South African Government and of the country's major political interest groups to proceed on the path of political and social reform initiated by State President F. W. de Klerk. This forum has brought together representatives of the African National Congress; Government; Inkatha Freedom Party; National Party; Labour Party; Inyandza National Movement (Kangwane); Transvaal and National Indian Congress (joint delegation); Venda Government; Bophuthatswana Government; United People's Front (Lebowa); Solidarity; Democratic Party; Transkei Government; National People's Party; Ciskei Government; Dikwankwetla Party (Qwa-Qwa); Intando Yesizwe Party (Kwa-Ndebele); Ximoko Progressive Party (Gazankulu); and South African Communist Party.

Representatives of the South African Government and 16 of the 18 political groups participating issued a Joint Declaration of Intent at the end of the meeting. The Declaration - a copy of which is attached* - committed the signatories to bring about an undivided South Africa pursuing freedom, equality and security for all. Paragraph 1 of the Declaration commits them as follows: to bring about an undivided South Africa with one nation sharing a common citizenship, patriotism and loyalty, pursuing amid our diversity freedom, equality and security for all - irrespective of race, colour, sex or creed; a country free from apartheid or any other form of discrimination or domination.

CODESA working groups have since made important progress and are preparing for a further meeting in the near future. At the heart of the political reform process is an acceptance and indeed insistence by the South African Government that there should be equality and non-discrimination before the law in all the affairs of the country.

Recently the South African Government lost a number of by-elections against the Conservative Party. The Leader of the Conservative Party claimed that the South African Government had lost its legitimacy and should resign. President F. W. de Klerk took up this challenge. A referendum was called.

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* The text of the Declaration has been placed in the files of the Secretariat and is available to members of the Special Committee for consultation.

The result was a resounding victory for President de Klerk's reform policy. The White electorate, which gave the National Party a mandate to negotiate a new constitution for South Africa in 1989, responded overwhelmingly in favour of continuation of the negotiation process. No less than 68.7 per cent of the electorate endorsed President de Klerk's initiatives, including the final dismantling of apartheid. The demise of apartheid is now irreversible. It can never be resuscitated. More than two thirds of the White electorate rejected apartheid.

Now is the time to acknowledge this fact. Now is the time to do away with structures in the rest of the world which were established to resist and fight apartheid - including structures in the United Nations - for the simple reason that apartheid in South Africa is extinct. What is now needed is encouragement of the negotiation process, and above all economic growth. What is needed are jobs, better education, housing, medical facilities. Up to 2 million people from South Africa's neighbouring countries have crossed the border in search of jobs, education, medical treatment and food. The whole southern Africa region is faced by the consequences of the most severe drought in human memory.

These are the issues that must constitute the agenda of the United Nations - not the antagonisms of the past. I would respectfully suggest that the Special Committee against Apartheid throws in its lot with those United Nations bodies that are addressing the socio-economic concerns of Africa.

SUDAN

Message from H.E. Lt. General Omer Hassan Ahmed AlBashir, President of the Revolutionary Command Council, Prime Minister, Ministry of Defence and Commander in Chief of the Sudan

[Original: English]

In joining the Special Committee and the international community in observing the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, on my behalf and on behalf of the people and Government of the Republic of the Sudan, we express our appreciation for the efforts made by the international community in general and the Special Committee against Apartheid in particular, aiming towards the complete eradication of the system of apartheid in South Africa.

In commemorating the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the people and Government of the Republic of the Sudan applaud the continuous efforts undertaken by the United Nations for the elimination of racial discrimination, and reaffirm their commitment to lend unfailing support to those efforts with a view to attaining the final goal, namely, the complete elimination of all forms of racial discrimination.

The recent developments in South Africa, including the ongoing political process, represent an encouraging sign towards the completion of the democratization and constitutional change in South Africa. The results of the recent referendum on democratic reform in South Africa constitute a major step towards the eradication of apartheid and the creation of a new, non-racial society in South Africa based on the respect of human rights.

On this occasion we reiterate once again our solidarity with the people of South Africa and wish them every success in their efforts towards the establishment of a democratic, undivided South Africa and the peaceful accomplishment of the constitutional change as aspired to by the people of South Africa.

SURINAME

Message from H.E. Mr. Runaldo Ronald Venetiaan, President of Suriname

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Government and the people of Suriname wish to reaffirm their solidarity with and full support for the people of South Africa in their just struggle for political freedom and equality and for a society free from injustice and discrimination.

The Government of Suriname welcomes the reforms that have already taken place and expresses the hope that the process of negotiations towards a new constitution can soon result in the creation of a non-racial society of majority rule, united and democratic.

We take this opportunity to reiterate our unswerving support for the continued efforts of the Special Committee against Apartheid in bringing about the complete elimination of all forms of discrimination in South Africa.

THAILAND

Message from Mr. Arsa Sarasin, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Thailand

[Original: English]

On the solemn occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I wish to reiterate once again, on behalf of the Government and people of Thailand, our full support for the abolition of apartheid.

We welcome and are very pleased to notice the continued development of the abolition of apartheid in South Africa. It is encouraging that, through the endeavour of every party concerned, the policy of apartheid will soon be eradicated and a non-racial, democratic South Africa will be stably established.

Finally, we would like to express once again to all South African people our sincere desire that all conflicts be resolved through peaceful negotiations based on the principle of justice and equality, so that permanent peace, stability and prosperity will finally be achieved in South Africa.

TOGO

Message from the Government of Togo

[Original: French]

The Government of Togo is pleased to be associated with the commemoration of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

The Government of Togo takes this opportunity to reaffirm its attachment to and support for all measures to achieve the total elimination of apartheid and all other forms of racial discrimination. It congratulates the Special Committee on its role at the forefront of the struggle and on all the efforts it has made since the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10 December 1948 and, in particular, the International Convention on the Suppression and Punishment of the Crime of Apartheid on 30 November 1973.

The solemn celebration of 20 March comes at the right moment to seal the great victory of the South African people over the iniquitous and intolerable apartheid system. An important page has just been turned with the massive vote in favour of political and social reforms in South Africa achieved in the referendum of 18 March 1992.

This is a victory not only for the South African people but for all those in the international community who cherish peace and justice and, in particular, for the Special Committee against Apartheid.

The struggle is far from over. Today a change in attitude and approach is required, the ultimate aim being the total elimination of racial discrimination in its most pernicious forms.

We must take this opportunity to condemn the resurgence of xenophobia, racism and facism in the Western democracies. This new situation proves, if proof were needed, that the fight for freedom and racial justice continues every day, requiring the mobilization of the whole international community and a constant effort to establish an international human rights culture.

The Government of Togo believes that this aim can be achieved through the effective acceptance by all States of international human rights instruments.

TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Message from Mr. Ralph Maraj, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago

[Original: English]

On this anniversary of the brutal Sharpeville massacre, I have the honour, on behalf of the Government and people of Trinidad and Tobago and on my own behalf, to pay sincere tribute to the past victims of apartheid and to the millions who continue to sacrifice and to struggle against that reprehensible system.

Thirty-two years have now elapsed since 69 men, women and children were mercilessly gunned down in Sharpeville by the South African police during a peaceful demonstration against the "pass laws", and more than 45 years since the United Nations first discussed the question of the oppressive apartheid policies practised in South Africa. Yet, despite the much-heralded reforms and the repeal of most major apartheid legislation, the South African majority continues to be deprived of those fundamental human rights which many societies have long taken for granted.

At this time of enthusiastic rededication to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and to the rule of law, the international community has a special responsibility to intensify its efforts to eliminate the heinous system of apartheid, a system that has been condemned as a crime against humanity.

In recognition of the reforms now under way in South Africa, some punitive measures have been relaxed by the international community. However, such action, correctly, must not be extended to the economic, financial and military fields until the process of change is irreversible.

The very positive result of the recent referendum in South Africa, however, provides more than a glimmer of hope that significant progress will be made in this process of change. It is our hope that all South Africans will accept the clearly expressed desire of the majority to work peacefully towards the establishment of a new, just, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

Trinidad and Tobago remains committed to the 1989 consensus Declaration on Apartheid and on this sad anniversary takes this opportunity to rededicate itself to the noble principles of the Charter of the United Nations and, most particularly, to reconfirm its unshakable commitment to the elimination of all forms of racism and racial discrimination wherever such heinous practices occur.

The international community for its part must utilize to the fullest all legitimate mechanisms established to deal with this cancer, which affects the daily lives of millions around the globe, and strive to encourage and

facilitate the intensification of activities at all levels to combat this scourge.

Trinidad and Tobago stands ready to play its part in this important endeavour.

TUNISIA

Message from H.E. Mr. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, President of Tunisia

[Original: French]

On the occasion of the solemn observance by the international community of the fifteenth International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, it gives me pleasure, both on my own behalf and on behalf of the Government and the people of Tunisia, to pay sincere homage to the consistent efforts and the sustained commitment of the United Nations with a view to eradicating apartheid.

The proclamation, in 1978, of International Anti-Apartheid Year, another important landmark in the campaign which the international community has conducted against apartheid since the 1960s with a view to promoting human rights and giving effect to the universal principles and values of the United Nations Charter, gave expression to humanity's concern at this evil practice and its determination to put an end to it.

Fifteen years later, thanks to the far-reaching changes that have taken place on the international scene and to the determination and the struggle of the South African people, the world is beginning to glimpse hopeful signs that the odious crime against humanity constituted by apartheid is in the process of being eradicated.

Faithful to its traditions as a country which respects human rights and the right of peoples to self-determination and to justice and firmly committed to international legality, Tunisia, which has always supported the just struggle of the South African people, is following with great interest the development of events in South Africa, as well as the struggle by the forces of progress to establish a democratic society.

While welcoming the progress that has been made towards the dismantling of the foundations of apartheid, we believe that the only possible way out for South Africa is that of dialogue and national reconciliation. The South African people must overcome the racial, psychological and institutional barriers if they are to give new impetus to the Convention on a Democratic South Africa (CODESA) on the basis of equality and equity for all people and if they are to establish a transitional government representative of all democratic forces without discrimination.

Tunisia welcomes the positive results of the referendum which has just been held in South Africa. This referendum has made it possible to work in the most favourable conditions for a swift conclusion to the process of political reform currently under way, which should lead to the total dismantling of the system of apartheid and to the emergence of a democratic, united and non-racial South Africa.

While my country would like at this time to reaffirm its support for the reform process, it appeals to the international community to continue monitoring the development of that process with vigilance and expresses the hope that the South African authorities will pursue the dialogue with parties and organizations such as the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan Africanist Congress of Azania (PAC) for the establishment of a transitional government, a constitutional parliament and a timetable for the process of democratization.

TURKEY

Message from Mr. Hikmet Cetin, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Turkey

[Original: English]

On the solemn occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I wish to reiterate the resolute support of the people and Government of Turkey for this cause.

The ruthless massacre of unarmed civilian Africans in Sharpeville on 21 March 1960 is a tragic event that cannot be forgotten. This day has since been observed by the international community as an occasion to express concern over racial discrimination in all its forms and manifestations.

All members of the United Nations have committed themselves under the Charter of the United Nations to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion, which is a sine qua non for establishing a peaceful international order. The positive developments both on the international scene and in South Africa itself have recently been conducive to eradicating the last vestiges of all kinds of racial discrimination.

In fact, we are following closely the recent policy of dialogue and reform initiated by President de Klerk in the beginning of 1990. In this context, we welcome the repeal of the basic laws of apartheid in May and June of 1991 as important steps towards the total elimination of the apartheid policy. Nevertheless, we are of the opinion that profound changes have yet to occur in South Africa and negotiations to commence on a new constitution. It is our earnest hope and wish that a system of democracy and racial equality, where the Black majority will be participating in the political and economic life of the country, will soon be established in South Africa, eventually

putting a complete end to the policy of apartheid, in keeping with the aspirations of the Black majority in this country as well as the expectations of the international community in this regard.

I would like to seize this opportunity to convey to the Special Committee against Apartheid our deep appreciation for its determined efforts to mobilize international action for the eradication of racial discrimination.

I also wish to reiterate, once again, that the people and the Government of Turkey are genuinely willing and ready to support unreservedly all international efforts aimed at the elimination of all kinds of racial discrimination.

UKRAINE

Message from Mr. A. Zlenko, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ukraine

[Original: Russian]

This year the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is being observed in the context of irreversible changes in the world, which have laid the foundations for a new, post-confrontational period in the development of mankind. Both in word and in deed, the world community is giving increasingly clear indications of its determination to eliminate hotbeds of tension in various parts of the planet, to promote democratic transformations and to lay foundations which will finally lead to a unified approach to the settlement of global problems. The process of our civilization's transition to a qualitatively new level of cooperation affects all aspects of life, including the struggle against racism and racial discrimination.

Today, Ukraine joins the world community in paying tribute to the memory of all who have suffered from racial discrimination and the policy of apartheid. The enormous efforts made by the majority of South Africans are bearing fruit. The process under way in South Africa to eliminate apartheid, a process which has been facilitated by the United Nations and, inter alia, by the consensus adoption of the United Nations Declaration on Apartheid and its Destructive Consequences in Southern Africa, is now irreversible.

The latest initiatives and practical steps taken by the Government of South Africa confirm its commitment to the transition to democracy. The general vision of the new South Africa is beginning to acquire more definite contours. The political wisdom and foresight manifested by the black leadership is also heartening since, despite the setbacks and difficulties, the dream of a new Africa will become reality in the near future.

In its Declaration of State Sovereignty, independent Ukraine has proclaimed the right of all nationalities living in its territory to an equal and free development and it now reaffirms its support for the just struggle of

the South African people for the total eradication of apartheid and for the creation of a united, non-racial and democratic society. The policy of apartheid is incompatible with human rights and dignity, the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and it poses a serious threat to international peace and security.

I am convinced that the world community will make every effort to ensure, in the very near future, the successful outcome of the historic opportunities which have emerged in South Africa. For its own part, Ukraine will continue to make every effort to assist the process of eradicating apartheid by peaceful means.

VENEZUELA

Message from the Government of Venezuela

[Original: Spanish]

On the occasion of the latest observance of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Government of Venezuela, following the international principles on human rights, reaffirms once again its vigorous condemnation of all forms of racial discrimination and expresses its support for all efforts aimed at eradicating that practice.

Venezuela takes this opportunity to express its satisfaction with the negotiations for the drafting of a new constitution in South Africa, an essential condition for the transformation of that country into a society where human rights are respected, which is democratic and non-racial and where equal opportunities are enjoyed by all. We believe therefore that the result of the recent referendum also marks a decisive step towards democratic reform in South Africa.

The Government of Venezuela hopes that the process which has been started will continue without interruption, with the participation of the entire population of South Africa. At the same time, it expresses its solidarity with the Special Committee against Apartheid and with the community of nations in its determined stance against racial discrimination.

VIET NAM

Message from H.E. Mr. Vo Van Kiet, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Viet Nam

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, I would like to extend to the Special Committee, the South African people and the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC) my warmest greetings.

The Vietnamese people are rejoicing to note that over the past years, the staunch struggle of the South African people under the leadership of ANC has recorded important successes in the implementation of national democratization process and in eliminating step by step apartheid in South Africa.

The people and Government of Viet Nam reaffirm their unswerving support for the just cause of the South African people and ANC aimed at completley eliminating apartheid in any form and building a South Africa of peace, independence, democracy and non-racial discrimination. We hope that the United Nations and the international community will continue practical activities to support the struggle of South African people and to implement effectively the 1992 programme of action of the Special Committee against Apartheid.

We are convinced that the just cause of the South African people and ANC, with the strong support of the progressive peoples all over the world, will certainly achieve complete victory.

YUGOSLAVIA

Message from the Government of Yugoslavia

[Original: English]

The observance this year of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination provides us with yet another opportunity to commend the consistent action pursued within the framework of the United Nations, and particularly in the Special Committee against Apartheid, with a view to the final elimination of racism, racial discrimination and apartheid.

Parallel to the profound changes taking place on the world scene and affecting all aspects of international relations, major processes are also under way in South Africa itself. The current establishment of new relations, which was primarily the result of the initiated negotiating process, will be of great significance for continuing democractic changes and the elimination of the remaining institutions of the system of apartheid, and for a dialogue among all factors in South Africa regarding constitutional changes and the establishment of new democratic relations free from discrimination on any grounds. However, despite all these efforts, the system of apartheid has not yet been dismantled. It still generates violence and causes the racial unrest that continues to plague South Africa. Disrespect for fundamental human rights and civil liberties of the majority population in this country as a consequence of an adverse impact of apartheid over the years on social, economic and cultural rights continues to give rise to serious concern. Reports testifying to the suffering of children who are still imprisoned and treated inhumanely are of particular concern. The international community must persist in its resolute efforts towards the total elimination of apartheid, all the more so because we are also witnessing threats that the policy of apartheid might be spreading to Europe, too, by the implementation

of classic-type genocidal policies by some Governments against some peoples. At the same time, the international community should extend its active and comprehensive support to the peaceful processes conducive to the creation of a democratic society free of racial divisions and discrimination.

Together with other non-aligned countries, Yugoslavia will continue vigorously to pursue its efforts aimed at an active role played by the United Nations and at the positive contribution of the world Organization to the complete elmination of apartheid. In this context, we support also the proposal of the Commission on Human Rights that the General Assembly take appropriate steps to declare the launching in 1993 of the third United Nations decade to combat racism and racial discrimination. We still deem it necessary to maintain the measures already in place and the pressure exerted by the international community until the ongoing processes in South Africa are sure to result in irreversible and substantial changes aimed at the ultimate elimination of the inhumane system of apartheid. Short of a full affirmation in practice of equal rights and equality of races, there will be no genuine democratic development in southern Africa or a full democratization of relations within the international community. Similarly, we believe that a sound and flexible approach by the international community should have a positive effect on the political changes in South Africa through support and appropriate assistance to those factors interested in continuing the processes of change and democratization.

We trust that, as in the past, the Special Committee againt Apartheid will make a special contribution to these efforts. For its part, Yugoslavia will continue to render its constructive support to the Special Committee, convinced that the task assigned to it by the international community with regard to the elimination of apartheid is ever closer to its realization.

II. MESSAGES FROM INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA COMMITTEE AGAINST APARTHEID

[Original: English]

On the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Korean Committee against Apartheid extends its firm solidarity with the Special Committee against Apartheid in its untiring efforts for the total abolition of abhorrent racism and racial discrimination.

We would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm our support for the legitimate struggle of the South African people for the total eradication of apartheid and the establishment of a free, non-racial and democratic South Africa.

Convinced that the meeting in commemoration of the International Day will bring about a favourable climate conducive to the expedition of the full and immediate implementation of all the United Nations resolutions and decisions adopted against apartheid, we wish a great success in the work of the Special Committee against Apartheid.

MOVEMENT FOR COOPERATION AND SOLIDARITY WITH THE PEOPLES OF ASIA AND AFRICA

[Original: English]

On behalf of members of the Afro-Asian Solidarity Movement in the countries of the Commonwealth of the Independent States (the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), we extend greetings to the Special Committee against Apartheid on the occasion of the International Day for the Elimination of Racism and Racial Discrimination.

The solid, decades-long support of the Special Committee against Apartheid to the liberation struggle in South Africa is now producing visible results. The day is coming closer in South Africa when racial massacres like the shooting at Sharpeville will no longer be possible.

Congratulating the Special Committee on its fundamental role in bringing down the system of apartheid, we wish the Special Committee further successes in combating racism and racial discrimination and pledge our full support to this noble cause.

WORLD FEDERATION OF TRADE UNIONS

[Original: English]

The World Federation of Trade Unions dips its banner in a solemn salute to the memory of the 69 innocent victims of the Sharpeville massacre and vows, together with all who share our sorrow, "You did not die in vain".

While applauding the outcome of the referendum of 17 March, we are mindful of the fact that 300 of our South African brothers and sisters died violent deaths in the last month, 14 of them during the night of 17 March, evidence that senseless violence still roams the highways and byways of South Africa.

The World Federation of Trade Unions shares the view that the referendum marks an important step on the road to a unitary, democratic, non-racial South Africa. But we are at one with those who say the process is neither complete nor irreversible.

In our view, the international community - led by the Government of President F. W. de Klerk - should seize the moment and use the mandate granted

in the referendum to move swiftly in the direction of an interim Government and constituent assembly.

It is altogether fitting and proper that we meet today in memory of those who fell at Sharpeville and the thousands of others who have sacrificed all in the struggle against apartheid. And it is right to draw inspiration for continued struggle from Tuesday's referendum.

But we should also remember that today is the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination - and that racial and ethnic turmoil, with all its tragic consequences - has increased in astronomical proportion in recent years. It has reared its ugly head in all parts of the world, with no nation free of the ugly manifestations of racial or ethnic discrimination.

In closing, a quote from Chris Bakker, a White construction worker in South Africa who voted "yes" in the referendum: "I voted 'yes'", he said. "It's the only thing to do for the future of this country ... my [Black] workmates don't have the vote and I must vote for them."

There are millions of Chris Bakkers in this world. They will respond to the challenge of eliminating racial discrimination. Let the Special Committee help lead the way.